

Record

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New missionaries testify to God's grace

SNELLVILLE, Ga. (BP) — Kenny Grant was a new U.S. Marine Corps recruit about 20 years ago when he learned his young girlfriend was pregnant, but God used those circumstances and the witness of a fellow soldier to lead him to faith in Christ.

He called his mother first and told her the news. He then called his girlfriend and said, "I don't know what happened yesterday, but I know our life is going to be different. We're going to raise our baby. We're going to get married."

Grant and his wife Shirley gave evidence of that difference on Feb. 7. They were among 77 missionaries of the North American Mission Board (NAMB) commissioned during a service of worship and celebration at First Church, Snellville, Ga.

Grant now serves as the pastor/director of the Savannah Baptist Center, an inner-city ministry reaching multihousing communities in downtown Savannah.

Their testimony was among the highlights of a service that also included videotaped descriptions of the work of all of the missionaries; words of challenge from NAMB President Robert E. Reccord; and even a visit from

Baptist Collegiate Ministries in Dayton, Ohio.

Nine years ago, Mitchell said, she was a bitter young teenager with a background of physical abuse who had never known genuine love. Then a friend invited her to church, where she heard a sermon about the love of God.

"I told my friend... 'I want to know about this God,'" Mitchell said. "I want to know about this love, and I want to know about somebody who would love me for who I am without me having to change for them."

"She said, 'I can tell you about him,' and she led me in a prayer," Mitchell continued. "Ever since then my life has been so full of blessings. I can walk around with a smile on my face, because I know there's a heavenly Father that is wrapping his arms around me every day of my life."

Reccord challenged the congregation — both missionaries and laypeople — to consider their commitment to God's calling in their own lives. He told of one instance in his own life when simple obedience was used by God to make an impact that is only just beginning.

Reccord said he and his wife, Cheryl, started a neighborhood Bible study in their home after they moved to the Atlanta area. The night they were supposed to begin, he was tired after a stressful day and briefly considered calling off the first night's study.

The doorbell rang early, and a woman at the door said she had seen a flyer advertising the Bible study and had been waiting outside for an hour and a half.

Within 24 hours, Reccord said, the woman accepted Christ and over the next year after being discipled by Cheryl, she led six family members to Christ.

"She called us a month ago and told us, 'I just wanted to call and say thanks. The first thing I did here is open a Bible study in my home,'" Reccord recounted. Every morning there are now 20 mothers praying

in his living room for their kids.

Neel, speaking as Annie Armstrong based on her writings, issued her own advice to the congregation on how to ensure the Holy Spirit will continue to work through their lives.

"If we want the Spirit, the fire of God falling on this place, we must have a sacrifice on the altar," she said.

"That sacrifice? Repentant hearts. No repentance, no sacrifice, no fire. Oh God, may you light the fire here tonight," Annie pleaded.

ACTING AS ANNIE — Annie Armstrong, portrayed by actress Freddie Neel, offers words of wisdom during a North American Mission Board commissioning service Feb. 7 at First Church of Snellville, Ga. (Photo by James Dotson)

PRAYING AT THE OUTSET — Bob Reccord (left), president of the North American Mission Board, prays with Jerry and Diane Connor during a Feb. 7 commissioning service at First Church of Snellville, Ga. The Connors serve as church planters in Annies Vancouver, British Columbia. (Photo by James Dotson)

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South Carolina actress Freddie Neel. Another testimony of God's transforming power came from Amy Mitchell, a US/C-2 missionary serving two years with

The Baptist Hour receives NRB Milestone Award

DALLAS (BP) — The Baptist Hour radio program hosted by Frank Pollard, pastor of First Church, Jackson, has received the National Religious Broadcasters (NRB) Milestone Award.

The Milestone Award is given to a program or programmer involved in radio or television ministry for more than 50 years.

The Baptist Hour is the longest-running radio program under former Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commis-

sion and its successor, the North American Mission Board and its FamilyNet subsidiary.

"It is a great honor for The Baptist Hour to be nominated as the recipient of the prestigious Milestone Award," said David Clark, president of FamilyNet



Pollard

and a former NRB president.

"We are grateful for the impact The Baptist Hour has had on countless lives."

The first broadcast of The Baptist Hour took place in January 1941. Pollard has been The Baptist Hour's speaker since 1977.

Syndicated

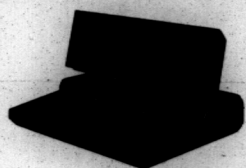
nationally, The Baptist Hour is produced 52 weeks a year.

The Baptist Hour program is heard 408 times weekly on radio stations across the country and is carried in 20 of the top 50 U.S. radio markets.

Other FamilyNet radio programs are On Track, Master Control, Powerline, and Country Crossroads.

The FamilyNet radio programs are heard by over 3.7 million unduplicated adult listeners every week.

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The powerful allure of politics

The intersection of politics and religion is strewn with the wreckage of many careers and organizations. Rare indeed is the model where politics and religion have peacefully co-existed in the same space for any length of time.

Yet that fact hasn't stopped Christian Americans from getting involved in politics, because religious people have a right to representation in the political discourse of this country.

On the other hand, craven politicians and their toadies with political agendas have been known to use well-meaning Christians for their own purposes. None of us are immune to the flattery and enticements that go along with political power, but we should possess a healthy skepticism about inducements that could trap us in a web of political intrigue.

From the recent inauguration of President George W. Bush comes a cautionary — and embarrassing — tale of what often happens when Christians let down their guard around political types with ulterior motives.

On January 19, leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention and other religious groups were invited to the Inaugural Prayer Luncheon for Unity and Renewal at the posh Hyatt Regency Hotel on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.

Among the program personalities were Dallas pastor Tony

Evans, who preached at the Mississippi Baptist Convention a few years ago; sometime Southern Baptist Jerry Falwell, pastor of Thomas Road Church and chancellor of Liberty University, both in Lynchburg, Va.; and Paul Crouch, head of the charismatic-leaning Trinity Broadcasting Network on which Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) president Jim Merritt, pastor of First Church, Snellville, Ga., has appeared; and Merritt himself.

Attending the luncheon were Morris Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee and former SBC president; Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission; Jack Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Church, Dallas; Ed Young, pastor of Second Church, Houston, Texas, and former SBC president; and Paul Pressler, known as one of the architects of the Conservative Resurgence in the SBC.

"The prayer luncheon featured a who's who of religious and political leaders..." according to the January 22 Baptist Press report from which the above lists of dignitaries were drawn.

There was only one problem. The luncheon was sponsored by the Washington Times Foundation, a front for Unification Church leader Sun Myung Moon, the convicted tax evader who believes he and his wife are the spiritual equals of Jesus Christ.

The Moons refer to themselves as the "True Parents" of

the human race, routinely hold mass marriage ceremonies involving thousands of people, and compel their misguided followers to sell cheap trinkets on roadsides.

There was no shortage of red faces when Moon's subterfuge was revealed, as reported by Baptist Press in a January 23 followup story.

"I was shocked to see that Sun Myung Moon was on the program and, in essence, the host," said Chapman, who was handed Unification Church materials on his way out of the luncheon.

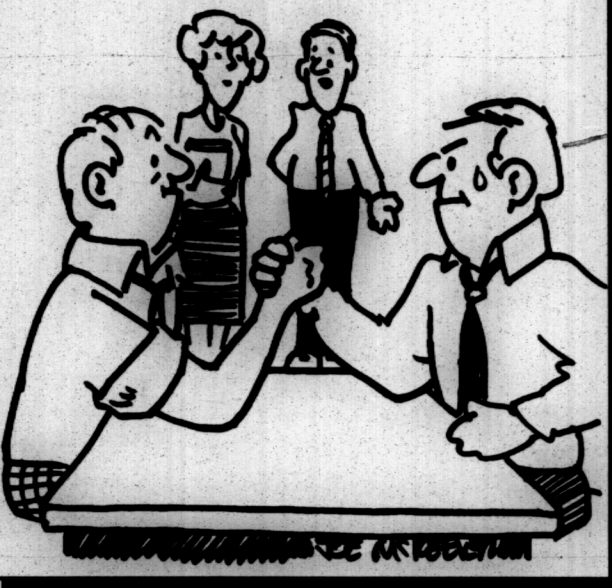
"This was completely unanticipated," Pressler observed.

"I didn't even see a program until I got there. I had no idea this was the nature of the meeting," Merritt pointed out.

The question that begs to be asked is, "Why not?" As representatives of the Southern Baptist Convention, why didn't these men know the nature of such a large, politically-connected event before agreeing to attend?

To be fair, anyone can be sucked into an embarrassing

"PASTOR LARRY AND PASTOR DOUG ARE SEEKING THE LORD'S WILL ABOUT THE PULPIT VACANCY OVER AT THE STATE CAPITOL."



situation such as this, and Moon did veil his sponsorship — however thinly.

The larger point to be made is that Christians, and especially Christian leaders, must take extra care to avoid being seduced by the glamor and prestige of politics. We must discipline ourselves to reach for a higher standard where such worldly pursuits are involved.

Merritt told Baptist Press, "I believe this incident will teach us to be a little more judicious."

There are more than a few Southern Baptists who pray that will indeed be the case.

GUEST OPINION: Lessons learned in Cambodia

By Leigh Ann Dans
Nashville, Tenn.

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Peering over the shoulder of a Cambodian motorbike driver, I saw sights that still stick so vividly in my mind:

- Roads that were impassable for most vehicles, except the small motorbikes on which we rode to get to our churches each day.
- Wood and bamboo houses on 12-foot high stilts, sitting in fields of mud and water.
- Smiles and waves from men, women, and children out fishing, swimming, or tending the rice in their flooded parcels of land.
- Cambodians whooping with laughter and shock as this plump parade princess rode by sitting "side saddle" on the back of a small bike.

Although I spent 10 days wading through hip-deep water and riding over muddy roads washed out by the worst flooding in 60 years I wouldn't trade a million dollars for the experiences I had during my mission trip to Cambodia.

As a member of the LifeWay team joining with International Crusades on this trip, I was thankful God had allowed me to see what he is doing in other parts of the world.

There were nine of us altogether on this team, including Jerry Wolverton, Phyllis Young, Michael Yarber, Dom Dyt, and LifeWay retiree Don Davis. Also joining the team were volunteers Pat Still, Ann Davis, and Frankie Dans.

Each day we split into teams of two to conduct house visitations that had been prearranged by the four churches to which we were assigned.

Typically, we visited four to six homes each day, with up to 50 people crowded in a small room, curious to hear what we had to say. The Cambodians have been so repressed by Buddhism, communism, the Khmer Rouge, and Pol Pot that some of



CAMBODIA GROUP — Cambodian mission volunteers stand around a statue of a lion in Phnom Penh. Leigh Ann Dans is sitting in front of the statue. (Photo by Michael Yarber)

them didn't even know who God was. Yet, it was obvious by the look on their faces that the Holy Spirit had revealed the truth of salvation to them. Our team of nine saw 1,332 decisions, 13 rededications, and three church starts.

Of the many Cambodians we met, one man in particular touched me so deeply, inspiring me by his tremendous walk with Christ. Pastor Voom, a 70-year-old pastor of the largest church in the region, was one of 13 preachers who had been imprisoned many years ago for his beliefs. He and one other man were the only two survivors of the ordeal. He was reluctant to speak freely about his experience, but he did tell us that his stay in prison was so long that his clothes rotted off of his body.

We will never understand the cost he has paid for his faith in Jesus. As Don Davis said, "Looking into Pastor Voom's eyes is like looking into a deep well."

What a treat and blessing God gave us. Yes, this trip was hard, but I wouldn't change one minute of it. I'm truly learning that every tribe and every tongue will be represented before the throne on the day we all lift our voice in unison to praise the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Leigh Ann Dans is employed through LifeWay Christian Resources' Marketing Planning Dept. She joined a group of volunteers on a LifeWay-sponsored mission trip to Cambodia on Nov. 1-14.

LifeWay mags target Christian audiences

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — With 1 billion searchable web-pages on the Internet today, 59% of Americans say they are overwhelmed with information, and 50% say they don't want any more knowledge than they absolutely need.

That's why the discipleship magazine department at LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention offers 11 magazines that cater to distinct groups of people with specific needs.

"We know the Internet is overwhelming at times. That's why we want to give Christians information that fits their needs in a convenient format," said Selma Wilson, director of LifeWay's discipleship magazine department. "If you lay down one of our magazines on the coffee table for a day or two, you can go right back to where you left off. Sometimes, that's difficult to do on the Web."

Wilson's area produces magazines designed for parents of children (ParentLife), parents of teenagers (Living with Teenagers), and a special edition of ParentLife for parents of new babies, newborn to age 2 (BabyLife). They also publish a magazine for single adults (Christian Single), older adults (Mature Living), families (HomeLife), and Christians seeking a healthy lifestyle (Christian Health).

Additionally, the department produces three monthly devotional guides:

heart of a parent, not being one at the time."

Living with Teenagers — Parent Ministry Leadership Edition offers several regular sections that can help youth ministers understand and minister to parents. Phil Briggs, a professor at Southwestern Seminary, writes a

feature story and furnishes monthly fellowship ideas.

BabyLife, for which Emery is also editor-and-chief, is a new arrival from the magazine department. First published in September 2000, the magazine is a special edition of ParentLife.

"Because of the significance of the birth of a child and the window of opportunity we have to influence eager parents in how to parent their babies, we designed an entire special issue of ParentLife magazine to meet the needs of new parents," Emery said.

Christian Health "is a trustworthy new magazine for believers who want to live a healthy, Christ-honoring life but are caught in the blur of a hectic lifestyle pace," Wilson said.



monthly column to help ministers understand the needs of parents and how those needs impact youth ministry programs.

The magazine also offers advice about ongoing parent ministry from Doug Fields, pastor to students at Saddleback Community Church in Lake Forest, Calif. It provides a discussion corner revolving off a

Journey, for women; Stand Firm, for men; and Believe, for new Christians.

One of the least-known magazines to emerge from the department targets youth leaders who must — as a byproduct of their jobs — minister to the parents of teenagers.

"Having served as a youth minister, I know the inadequacy I felt in trying to help parents improve their parenting skills," said Joy Emery, editor-in-chief of Living with Teenagers — Parent Ministry Leadership Edition. "There was no way that I could really know the

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Broadcasters cut NAE ties

DALLAS (BP) — The board of the National Religious Broadcasters (NRB) voted unanimously Feb. 9 to formally end its relationship with the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), an organization that recently began a dialogue with the National Council of Churches (NCC).

Board members voted 81-0 to cut all ties, communications director Karl Stoll said. Since 1944, the Christian conservative broadcasters group has been affiliated with the National Association of Evangelicals. The broadcasters were concerned about NAE's interest in becoming involved with the National Council of Churches, Stoll said, telling the Fort Worth Star-Telegram the broadcasters and the evangelical association "were going in two different directions."

The NRB did not announce its decision to the news media until the annual convention, which ended Feb. 11, Stoll said. "We just felt that was a situation that we didn't want to make a big deal about," he said. "It was something that should be quiet and handled internally among our board."

The NAE is a group of 36 Protestant and Orthodox denominations that focus on disaster relief, famine aid, and other social and justice programs. The NAE was founded in 1942 as conservative Protestants sought to coalesce around a basic evangelical program and establish an alternative to the liberal Federal Council of Churches, the precursor to the NCC.

Last year, the evangelical association joined with other groups — including, originally, the National Council of Churches — in adopting a Christian Declaration of Marriage. However, the National Council of Churches removed its support for the declaration, which affirmed marriage as a lifelong commitment between a man and a woman and opposed same-sex marriages.



BABYLIFE TEAM — The team working on BabyLife magazine includes (from left) Cindy Lutz, Nancy Comeaux, Jeff Large, and editor-in-chief Joy Emery. (Photo by Morris Abernathy)

Looking back

10 years ago

Fragments of Scud or Patriot missiles from the Gulf War strike the home of Southern Baptist workers Ray and Suzanne Altman in the Baptist Village, a conference center in Petah Tiqva, Israel. The complex is about eight miles from an urban area repeatedly struck by Iraqi Scud missiles.

20 years ago

In the midst of what he called "volatile times," Southern Baptist Convention President Bailey Smith opens conversations with rival factions within the nation's largest protestant denomination. "I want to be a unifier ... I don't want to be divisive," Smith said.

50 years ago

Trustees approve construction of a 70-bed annex to the Baptist Hospital on State Street in Jackson at a cost of \$275,000. The expansion, designed to alleviate a critical shortage of beds at the hospital, is also unanimously endorsed by the hospital's staff.

Abortion transport ban reintroduced

WASHINGTON (BP) — Legislation protecting parental rights when an underage, pregnant girl is considering abortion in another state has been reintroduced in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The Child Custody Protection Act would make it a crime for an adult to transport a minor to another state for an abortion without a parent's involvement when the state in which the girl lives requires either parental notification or consent before such a procedure. The bill would enable parents to sue those who violate the law.

The House easily adopted the bill in 1998 and 1999, but the measure died in the Senate both times. In both years, the Clinton White House refused to endorse the legislation as passed by the House.

Opponents of the bill have argued in part it will cause girls to obtain unsafe abortions in order to avoid informing their parents or seeking a judicial bypass.

Women's ministry responding to 'hunger'

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — "Froo-froo" will only get you so far. That's what Chris Adams, women's enrichment specialist at LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, says about women's ministry.

Gone are the days when women's ministry simply meant feel-good fellowships and exchanging recipes. Women in today's churches are hungry for something else — knowing Christ, growing in his service, and loving his Word, she said.

Women's ministries are growing daily, said Adams who believes it's God's doing.

"It's a movement of God," she said. "That's the only explanation. We can't deny it. Women are so hungry to personally be in the Word of God. It's a hunger we've not seen in this magnitude."

Adams believes the hunger by women to know God personally is growing exponentially because women leaders in the churches are reaching out to them and attempting to meet their unique needs.

"Women need godly women as role models," Adams said. "We see women with a heart to reach other women, to help them grow and have their lives spiritually transformed."

Reaching out to other women is one of the areas LifeWay's women's enrichment ministry lifts up through various

resources and leadership events. Adams, with the cooperation of the Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) and the North American Mission Board (NAMB), encourages the use of mentoring, education, and missions.

The "Woman to Woman" mentoring guide published by LifeWay is just one example of what is available for women interested in starting a ministry in their own churches.

More important than just starting a women's ministry is sustaining it, Adams said.

"It all goes back to seeing women's lives become transformed, seeing them figure out how to let Jesus have every little part of their hearts. There's a vision to affect women and those around them. Everybody they have relationships with will grow."

Although there are no hard and fast rules to initiating a women's ministry, Adams offered a plan for women who feel such a call to do so.

"Get on your knees," she said. "The first step has to be prayer so that the woman is in touch with God. Find out where God is moving."

She also encouraged women who feel this calling to share their vision with their pastors or other staff members, asking them also to pray about the vision and give feedback about the needs of the church.

Potential leaders in women's ministry should determine the purpose of their particular ministry and continually assess the needs of the women in the church.

How? "Just ask them," Adams said.

LifeWay's women's enrichment ministry explores these stages of development in its training sessions and resources, Adams said.

Adams said women's ministry leaders need to keep their fingers on the pulse of the women in their churches, while keeping their eyes on the vision for the ministry.

"Look down the road five to 10 years and get a vision for where God wants you to be. What do you need to do now to get you there? What will it take? Continual assessment and re-evaluation is the key," she said.

Adams' e-mail address is 251-2810.

GROWING MINISTRY — Chris Adams, women's enrichment ministry specialist with LifeWay Christian Resources, answers a question during a session of the Women's Leadership Consultation held Feb. 10-12 at Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth. (BP photo by Bryan Murley)

Chris.Adams@lifeway.com, and her phone number is (615)

Consultation teaches women to share lives, faith

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Women in ministry who pour themselves out in prayer, personal testimony, and in the investment of relationships will be richly rewarded,

said speakers at this year's Women's Leadership Consultation (WLC), Feb. 8-10 at New Orleans Seminary.

With the theme, "Share Life: the life of a woman ... poured out into others," signifying the Titus 2:2 concept of equipping women to reach women, New Orleans area women and women as far away as Utah and New Hampshire learned about the significant roles women play in ministering to each other.

"God is using women today to influence other women to him," said WLC coordinator Rhonda Kelley, wife of New Orleans Seminary (NOBS) President Chuck Kelley and NOBS adjunct professor of women's ministry. "As examples of Christ, we can touch the lives of women personally and biblically."

Hosted annually by one of the six seminaries of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), WLC's purpose is to bring together women leaders in the local church involved in women's ministries and missions. Women from SBC ministries

were present to network, lead workshops, and introduce new materials.

Vicki Courtney, founder and editor-in-chief of Virtuous Reality, an Internet-based ministry to college women, shared the testimony of how God led her from being a self-described feminist in college to being a nationally recognized Christian women's ministry speaker.

Explaining that she became a Christian during her junior year at the University of Texas in Austin, Courtney shared how she observed the "crossroads" many college women face and how the Lord eventually led her to start a conference-based mentoring ministry and an online magazine to expose women to the Christian worldview.

Sharing her testimony has helped countless other women also to be encouraged to pursue the vision that God has placed on their hearts, Courtney said. She has found 1 Thess. 2:8 to be true: "We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the Gospel of God but our lives as well."

In a similar way, women can make a difference in others' lives when they not only share the gospel but pour out their very lives to other women, Courtney said.

Janet Thompson, director of the "Woman to Woman" mentoring ministry of Saddleback Valley Community Church in Lake Forest, Calif., taught on the importance of investing in one another's lives through mentoring.

The next WLC, with the theme "Holiness: Making the Faith in Your Heart the Faith of Your Life," will be at Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., Jan. 31-Feb. 2, 2002. Persons interested in receiving information can contact Jan Gold at Southeastern Seminary at (919) 556-3101, ext. 344, or e-mail magnoliahill@sebts.edu.

'Just pray,' Moms-in-Touch leader urges

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Christians get so bogged down in the questions of prayer that they don't pray, Fern Nichols told women ministry leaders and potential leaders at the Women's Leadership Consultation (WLC), Feb. 8-10 at New Orleans Seminary (NOBS). She listed the questions that often distract the woman who wants to pray: "Do I have enough faith? Am I sure all my sins are confessed? I haven't really prayed in a long time; will God really listen to me? Is it really God's will? Oh my goodness, just pray!" urged Nichols, president and founder of Moms-in-Touch, International, a ministry uniting moms to meet for weekly prayer for their children and schools. "Satan wants to get us so confused, but God will help you work it through when you start to pray," Nichols continued, stating that women must resolve to pray. "Even when you don't feel like it, pray. Even when you don't understand all that is involved, pray. Even when you don't see the consequences you expect, pray."

Nichols and other women from nationally recognized women's ministries spoke to more than 200 women from local New Orleans churches and from as far away as Utah and New Hampshire for this year's annual Southern Baptist seminary-sponsored WLC. This year's theme, "Share Life: the life of a woman ... poured out into others," signifying the Titus 2:2 concept of equipping women to reach women, was presented in inspirational plenary sessions, panel discussions, and specialized workshops. Christian women today have the opportunity to influence generations through the power of prayer and one-to-one ministry," said WLC coordinator Rhonda Kelley, wife of New Orleans Seminary President Chuck Kelley and NOBS adjunct professor of women's ministry. "It is such a joy to see women committed to prayer and sharing the love of Jesus with others. Noting that a prayer habit is more important than the glow, Nichols reminded WLC participants they are being fashioned into a person who is measured by principles rather than pollsters and by decisions rather than delights.

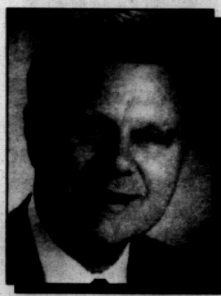
"Why pray?" Nichols asked the women, before giving several reasons. First, Christians should pray because it brings God glory, she said. Noting Proverbs 15:8, which states that the prayer of the upright pleases God, Nichols said that every time prayer is answered, God is glorified. Second, Christians should pray because Jesus commanded them to pray. Even the prayers of the most ignorant person have power, Nichols pointed out, citing Jeremiah 3:33 in which God commands his followers to call unto him and he will show them great and mighty things. Third, Christians should pray because it gives hope, she said, noting that in Hebrews 11 God says he rewards those who earnestly seek him. Fourth, Christians should pray to have fellowship with God Almighty. "The sovereign Lord and creator of this earth is our Dad," Nichols shared, "and children naturally want to talk to their dad." Jesus is asking if he can come in and have dinner with his followers, she continued. "He wants to join us in our lives," Nichols said.

A COLD CHURCH

Have you ever worshipped in a cold church? I'm not talking about the kind of coldness that is measured by degrees of Fahrenheit or Celsius. I mean a *really* cold church where the spiritual atmosphere is icy. It is the kind of atmosphere that is so chilly you can actually feel it. It's not that the church folks don't welcome people — it's that they welcome people so reluctantly! Of course, that could be simply because they got stuck on that committee and would feel embarrassed not to speak to you.

It is also not that the folks in that "cold" church do not sing. Regardless of whether it's hymns or choruses, they just seem to sing with so little (or no) enthusiasm. Even when they use their voice, there is not a twinkle in their eye about the great truths of which they sing. It is also not that the preacher does not preach, or even deliver a good sermon. Yet, in the context of the service, it is fairly easy to see and sense that people are not receiving what is being said — because it is cold!

On New Year's Eve, 2001, many of us started getting snow. On New Year's Day there was a blanket of white snow across central and south Mississippi. It was beautiful! It was the introduction to a week of extreme cold. The days were below freezing and the nights were in the teens with wind chills in the single digits. The result was that ponds, puddles, and streams were so cold, for so long, that they froze over. The folks up north are used to that kind of thing, but here in Mississippi our cold spells are so quickly followed by warm spells that we rarely see much ice on our lakes and ponds.



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

Almost a week later, after the snow and the last of the arctic cold passed, the temperatures got back up in the 60's and one Saturday, six days after the snow and cold, I went out for an afternoon jog in the spring-like weather. The warm sun was beaming down and it was such a beautiful day, so invigorating after the week we had just been through. Even though the temperature was in the mid-60's, I began to notice that there was still ice in streams and puddles of water alongside the road. It was certainly warm enough to melt the snow and ice, but there it was — lingering on.

I wondered how and why this could be. As I slowly moved along and observed different ice patches, two things began to come into focus. First, the ice that remained was still there because it had stayed cold for so long, and the ice had become so thick that it could withstand the warmth. The other thing, in every case, that contributed to the ice remaining was that it was in the shade. There the ice was, hidden from the sun, in the shadows, and so it remained frozen.

I have observed those same true elements in churches that are cold and stay that way. Sometimes they have been so cold, for so long, that it has become the only atmosphere they know. The cold is so thick and fixed that it seems to be unalter-

able. In addition, there seems to be a sense in which people, whose hearts get cold towards God, hide in the shadows so that they will not be touched by the warmth of the Son.

As I thought about cold churches I was reminded, just from a personal standpoint, that there had been a number of times when it was not the church that was so cold, but it was me! Have you ever been in a room where everybody seemed to be fine and adjusted to the atmosphere, yet you were chilled to the bone? You wondered if you were getting sick, or if you had a fever, and then you began to realize there really was something wrong with you. That happens in churches and in our spiritual walk. It is not always the "other" folks that are cold-hearted — it may well be us!

One final thought about cold churches. I'm not sure that the Lord has called us and gifted us with the spiritual capacity to go around telling who is cold and who is not, and who is hot and who is not. It seems to me that Jesus did not call us into the ministry of being thermometers so much as he called us to be thermostats. Sometimes when we are accusing a church, a congregation, or a group of people of being cold, we may be saying a great deal about ourselves — that we are not so hot either!

The solution is to let the Lord warm you, melt you down, use you as he wants to, and you may, just possibly, have a warming impact on those around you. When that happens, the church will no longer be cold because the warmth of our Lord has penetrated the place and warmed up the hearts through you!

IMB won't require BF&M affirmation

AUGUSTA, Ga. (ABP) — Nearly 5,000 Southern Baptist international missionaries won't be forced to sign their denomination's new faith statement but must commit to working "in accordance with and not contrary to" its teachings.

International Mission Board (IMB) trustees voted Jan. 24 in Augusta, Ga., to "wholeheartedly" affirm the Baptist Faith and Message as revised by the Southern Baptist Convention last June as the "standard for carrying out the programs and ministries" of the 155-year-old agency based in Richmond, Va.

The board declined, however, to end its tradition of requiring missionaries to carry out their responsibilities "in accordance with and not contrary to" the confessional document even if they disagree with minor points.

Congo turmoil delaying workers' entrance

KINSHASHA, Congo (BP) — Despite unrest in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), formerly known as Zaire, Southern Baptist missionaries still hope to enter the country for the first time since 1992.

DRC President Laurent Kabila was assassinated Jan. 16 by one of his own bodyguards. With all modes of transport in and out of the country shut

down and a government in turmoil, International Mission Board (IMB) missionaries Rusty and Debbie Pugh and Michael Hamline were not sure if they would ever move from their home in Nairobi, Kenya, to Kinshasa.

"Things seem to be settling down now," Rusty said. "Kabila's son, Joseph, has been sworn in as the new president

and the government has made a big effort to welcome foreigners. The foreign minister said he hoped many foreigners would continue to allow the Congo to be their second country."

The three missionaries originally planned to enter the country and start their ministry Jan. 25. Now plans are on hold in hopes that the country settles down even more.

Despite the unrest, Christian influence in the country is growing. Citizens enjoy freedom of religion. The Operation World prayer guide estimates the population as 42.1% Catholic, 36% Protestant (including 21% evangelical), 1.4% Muslim and 2.7% traditional religion.

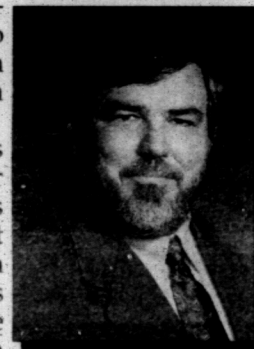
On trips in and out of the Congo, the Pughs have seen a

tremendous growth and commitment in the Congolese Christians. They work with a leader whose congregation has started 12 new churches. The Pughs plan to train local Christian leaders in evangelism and Bible schools.

"Everyone knows that in the fairly near future the missionaries will be forced out again," Rusty Pugh said. "That's why it is so important for the leaders to be trained in starting their own churches."

"Our future in the Congo is always going to be 'iffy' at best," he said. "We can always use prayers for our safety, but the Congolese need your prayers for daily sustenance," Pugh said.

They need to feel God's comfort in the midst of this turmoil," he added.



Rusty Pugh



Debbie Pugh

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RICHBURG BAPTIST CHURCH is in search of a part-time minister of youth. Please send resume to Richburg Baptist Church, ATTN: Youth Search Committee, 72 Sandy Run Road, Hattiesburg, MS 39402.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, DURANT, MISS. is seeking a full-time minister of music and youth. Send resume to Rev. Dan Watts, 132 W. Mulberry Street, Durant, MS 39063. For more information call the church at (662) 653-3105.

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VBS effort pays dividends for entire church

By Tony Martin
Associate Editor

Vacation Bible School (VBS) has proven to be one of the most effective outreach and Bible study tools available to

the local church. Just ask the membership of Harmony Hill Church in Burnsville if VBS makes a difference.

Pastor Jackie Taylor and his wife Ella moved to Burnsville from Alabama just a couple of years ago.

"I've been directing Vacation Bible Schools for 27 years," Ella said. "Harmony Hill hadn't held a VBS in years, but the year before we arrived they enrolled 70 kids. They

thought that was great. I told them to get ready — we were going to do better."

Burnsville is a community of about 1,000 people located midway between Corinth and Iuka. Harmony Hill Church, as befitting the name, is perched on a knoll next to a cemetery and an apartment complex. Ella states that the church has 192 people enrolled in Sunday School, with 95-100 people typically in attendance.

So it's no small feat that last year's VBS enrolled 301 kids. About the same number were enrolled in 1999.

How did they do that? "I call it the three P's," said Ella, "prayer, promotion, and preparation."

Everything the church does in conjunction with VBS is bathed in prayer, she said. "That's the single most important thing we can do."

Next is promotion. "This is how we manage to reach so many," Ella said. "We don't hold anything back in promotion. We use all the free outlets we can, in the paper and on radio. We use signs, flyers, and parades. We'll make posters, have contests among the children, and promote through children's church."

"Another key is early planning," Ella said. "I get the early bird kit and get excited myself before I start enlisting workers. I give people a chance to volunteer first before I approach people personally." She uses records from the previous year and Sunday School rolls to find workers.

Ella makes a detailed folder with materials and information for each worker and gets all the materials to workers two weeks before the VBS clinic. "That way, they can better understand what they learn at the clinic."

The clinic is a must, she states. "You learn so much from the other people there," Ella said.

Ella meets with her workers about three times before VBS. By doing that, she says, she can get everyone on board with what's happening. Then, a week before the school, she and her workers have a preparation day.

Because of the size of Harmony Hill's VBS, their church building can't accommodate all the students. The church secures three large tents, and uses a local park for recreation. Their school is held in the evenings from 6-9 p.m.

Other positive touches include having meals provided each evening for the workers in addition to the refreshments served to the children. Ella also writes a personal letter to every parent of every child, inviting them to family night.

VBS seems to be having an impact on the life of the church as a whole.

"This past Wednesday, we had 62 children in mission activities," Ella said. "We give God the glory for all that he's done."

Editor's Note: For more information on Vacation Bible School in Mississippi, contact Linda Reeves in the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Sunday School Department at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone (601) 292-3294 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 294. E-mail: lreeves@mbcb.org.



VBS THEME — Truth Trackers is the theme for 2001 Vacation Bible School (VBS) programs across the Southern Baptist Convention. For more information on 2001 VBS, see editor's note at right.

JUST FOR THE RECORD

Cornerstone celebration was held at First Church, Tutwiler, Sept. 24. "The cornerstone (time capsule) was opened and the memorabilia was examined, as planned in 1951 when the church was built. The memorabilia continues to be on display at the church and will soon be returned to the cornerstone," said J. B. Hays Jr., pastor. The guest speaker was Rocky Henriques of Jackson.

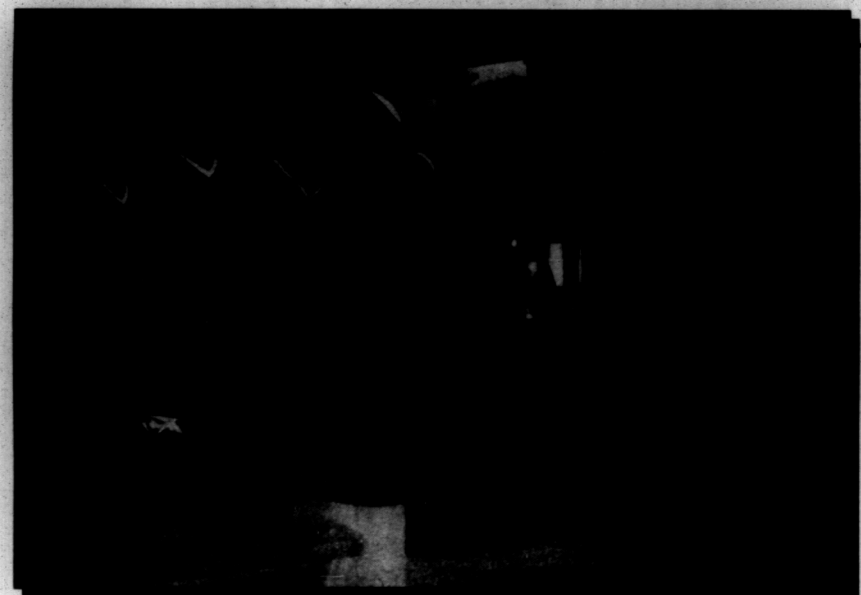
Weekend Oasis for Women will be held on March 2, 6-9 p.m., at First Church, Ocean Springs. Special fellowship and music will begin at 5:30 p.m. The keynote speaker will be Janet Pope of Hattiesburg. For additional information, contact Leigh Coleman, women's enrichment ministry of First Church, at (228) 875-4532.

Parkway Church, Houston, sponsored a wild game supper and sportsmen's training seminar on Jan. 20 with David Fortenberry and Gene Hoyt from Outdoor Evangelism. There were six professions of faith with 130 men and boys in attendance. Gregg Thomas is pastor.

George and Greene associations held its 23rd annual Baptist Men's Banquet at First Church, Lucedale. David Fortenberry and Gene Hoyt of Outdoor Evangelism presented

the program. "Out of the 300 men present for the banquet, there were four professions of faith and 28 rededications," said John Henry, associational missions director.

Mt. Zion Church, Brookhaven, hosted Heaven's Gates, Hell's Flames, Jan. 14-17, with over 1,800 in attendance and 192 decisions for Christ. The church baptized 56 people on Sunday, Feb. 4.



First Church, Vardaman, held note burning services on Dec. 3. The church paid the note on a 7,000-square-foot multi-purpose building that includes fellowship hall, half-court gym, and Sunday School rooms. Building committee members are Jim Blue, Jerry Hamilton, "Chick" Martin, Annette Logan, Peggy Skinner, Zilla Spencer, and Ray Sutherland. (Not all members are shown in the picture.) John J. Adams is chairman of deacons. Dale Easley is pastor.



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Dr. John Sullivan
Executive Director
Florida Baptist Convention

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July 1, 8, 22, 29
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October 7, 21, 28
November 11 (Sunday only), 25
December 2 (Sunday only), 9, 16, 23, 30
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RESUMES REQUESTED for FBC Zachary, La. Pastor retiring. Send resume to FBC, c/o Sam Johnson, P.O. Box 593, Zachary, LA 70791. Minimum of 5 years pastoral experience required.

LAWRENCE COUNTY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION (Tennessee) is taking resumes for Director of Missions. Send resumes postmarked on or before February 28 to Lawrence County Association of Baptists, 2427 Hwy 43 South, Leoma, TN 38468.

SEEKING DIRECTOR OF CHURCH DEVELOPMENT/GROWTH. Send resumes to: Golden Triangle Baptist Association, 2750 IH 10 East Beaumont, TX 77703.

FOR SALE: Forty-six choir robes, \$35 each. Forty-five red choir dresses designed by Praise Hymn Fashions (like new), \$30 each. Sixty-two church pews (12 foot and 16 foot long). Church sound system (Peavey) including equipment rack, \$2000 (662) 226-5316.

SUPER GRACE BEACH HOUSE for rent. Excellent for staff retreats or family vacations. Four bedrooms plus pull out sofa, 2 1/2 bath, large screen porch, located in a private subdivision at the beach at Fort Morgan, Ala. Call Allan or Linda Rankin and we will e-mail photos. (888) 784-4025.

FULL-TIME STUDENT MINISTER POSITION. New Chapel Hill Baptist Church, West Monroe, La. Please fax resume to (318) 396-1004 or e-mail nch@lwol.com.

BRANSON, MO CONDO - sleeps six. Stay 3 nights, 4th free or 5 nights, 6th and 7th free. Free coffee, tea, and cocoa. \$100.00 daily. Register for free return trip. Accommodates large groups. Call early for reservations (662) 746-4632.

FOR SALE: 1987 Ford Bus; 32 passenger; V-8 engine; \$8500.00. Contact (601) 732-2441.

CHRISTIAN SOLOIST open for engagements. Songs of today and yesterday. No set price, freewill offering. Recording artist. (662) 869-8697.

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

February 22, 2001

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.

We can help you raise money
for your building program!

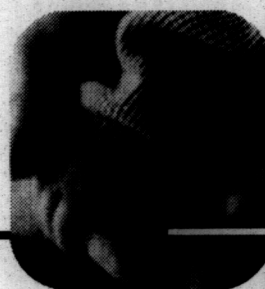
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Contact Jerry Mixon, Stewardship Director, 601-292-3347 or 1-800-748-1651, ext. 347

**Challenge
to Build**



CHILDREN

our Past, Present and Future

Mississippi Baptist

2001 Christian Education Clinic

(formerly Church Weekday Education Clinic)

FBC, Jackson

March 17, 2001

Cost: Registration fee \$16 (advance registration required)

Schedule: 7:30 a.m. - Registration
10-10:30 a.m. - Brunch
12:30 p.m. - Dismissed

Classes of special interest to teachers in Christian Schools, Kindergartens, Mothers' Day Out, Day Care Learning Centers, and parents who home school. The Mississippi Private School Association accredits all classes for Continuing Education Units and the Mississippi State Department of Health accredits for required staff development.

Classes include:

- Teaching Infants and Ones
- Homemade Games & Toys
- Books (Classes are for various preschool age groups)
- Preschool Art (Classes are for various preschool age groups)
- Preschool Music (Classes are for various preschool age groups)
- Elementary Games & PE (Grades 1-3 and 4-6)
- Creation vs. Evolution (Grades 4-6)
- Web Wise :- (Grades 1-6)
- Elementary Classroom Devotionals
- Chapel in Christian Schools
- And many more (Call to be mailed a full listing)

Presenters include:

- Larry Dry, LifeWay Nashville
- Linda R. Fowler Maryland/Delaware Baptist Convention
- Don Hicks, Mississippi Baptist Convention
- Judy Hicks, Clinton
- June Holland, Maryland/Delaware Baptist Convention
- Mary Ann Jacobs Hinds Community College
- Keith May Hillcrest Christian School
- Kathy Shows, Madison
- Peggy Ward, Vicksburg

Mississippi Baptist Discipleship & Family Ministry Department
1-800-748-1651 or 968-3800 or E-mail dhicks@mbcb.org.



O N E V O I C E C O N C E R T

First Baptist Church, Mendenhall, Miss.

6 p.m., February 25, 2001

"I BELIEVE"

GA Father/Daughter Overnight

April 6-7 Camp Garaywa \$33 per person

(includes meals, lodging, insurance, and program fees)

**GA Father/Daughter Overnight
Registration Deadline: March 23**

Parent's Name _____

Daughter's Name/Age _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number _____ (H) _____ (W)

Church Name _____ Association _____

Emergency Contact: Name _____ Phone _____

Number Attending _____ x \$33 = \$ _____ (total enclosed)

Please remember these WMU procedures:

- Please mail in your registration form with payment. Reservations may not be made by phone.
- Groups wishing to bunk together must register together. Whenever possible, please send one check for the entire group. Make checks payable to MBCB and send to Father/Daughter Overnight, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205

BAPTIST HYMNALS

NEEDED FOR AFRICAN SEMINARY

The only seminary in Africa offering a graduate degree in Church Music is in Ogbomosh, Nigeria. Currently most African church choirs sing only the melody of hymns from memory, for they have only the words without music.

Jimmy McCaleb, Church Music Department consultant, after teaching a course at this seminary, has a burden to provide our fellow Baptist musicians in Africa with copies of the 1991 Baptist Hymnal. Their choirs could then proclaim the theology of our Baptist faith in beautiful four-part harmony!

You can help with a financial gift. One hymnal is \$5. A box of 20 is \$100. If you or your church group would like to participate in this ministry, please call Jimmy McCaleb at 601-292-3273, 1-800-748-1651 or E-mail him at jmccaleb@mbcb.org.

Checks may be made out to the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and mailed to:

Jimmy McCaleb
MBCB
P.O. Box 530
Jackson, MS 39205

THE BAPTIST HYMNAL

Super Summer 2001

Barry St. Clair

Jake Gullledge

July 16-20

Mississippi College & FBC, Clinton

Super Summer Mississippi is for the student who is a mature and responsible leader and is growing in their relationship to Christ. Students attending Super Summer spend approximately 20 hours in discipleship and evangelism training. Students are led in this training by youth leaders from across the state. They are also challenged and equipped to utilize their talents to penetrate their culture for Christ in a creative and effective way. Throughout Super Summer, students are encouraged to use the freedom they have in Christ to change their world. Don't miss out on an opportunity to be part of Super Summer 2001. This year's camp is July 16-20 and is held at Mississippi College and FBC, Clinton.

For more info, contact the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department
1-800-748-1651 or 601-968-3800



Linda R. Fowler

Parenting Power Lab

**Featuring new notebook and videos
on different aspects of parenting**

- written by Linda R. Fowler, director of ministries for Maryland Baptist Family and Children's Services
- produced by Maryland/Delaware Baptist Convention

Lab Locations:

- 7 - 9 p.m., Monday, March 19 - Bay Vista BC, Biloxi (228) 338-1166
- 7 - 9 p.m., Tuesday, March 20 - Ridgecrest BC, Madison (601) 853-1090
- 8:30 a.m., Tuesday, March 20 - FBC, Gulfport, Parenting Power display for the area senior adult rally

For more info, contact the Discipleship and Family Ministry Dept. at 1-800-748-1651 or 601-968-3800

State Singles Leadership Lab

March 30 & 31 Central Hills

Cost: \$30

(includes lodging for one night, three meals and registration)

Conferences:

- Ministers responsible for singles - Karen Gibson
- Singles leadership (includes Sunday School teachers) - Larry Garner, Jackson, singles lecturer and co-author of *Single Solution*
- Associational singles - Glenn Shows, MBCB, singles consultant
- Adventure recreation, ropes course leadership - Ronny Joe Webb, FBC, Laurel
- Includes music, round-table opportunities, rap session and fellowship

Send check to MBCB: c/o Glenn Shows, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205
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Music Specialists
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March 16, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Baptist Building, Jackson

PURPOSE:

To provide skill development and knowledge of electronic keyboards for those who serve as worship leaders.

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REGISTRATION FORM KEYBOARD WORKSHOP 2001

March 10, 1 p.m.-March 11, 1 p.m.

NAME _____ PHONE _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
CHURCH _____ ASSOCIATION _____

Enclose \$20 non-refundable registration fee. Fee includes materials, Friday night meal, break time refreshments. Please register before March 6, 2001. Keyboard Collections will be available for purchase.

Mail registration form to: Keyboard Workshop 2001, Church Music Department, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. If you have questions, call us at 1-800-748-1651 or 601-292-3272 or our FAX is 601-968-3928.

Motels in or near Clinton - Please mention Keyboard Workshop to receive group rates.

Comfort Inn - 601-924-9364Single \$55, Double \$60
Days Inn - 601-925-5065Double \$55
Holiday Inn Express - 601-924-0064Double or King-size \$56

Centri-Kid

Older
Children's
Retreat

July 19-21, 2001
Gulfshore Baptist Assembly

Centri-Kid is a recreation-based camp that provides fun for each camper while at the same time teaches Christ through each event, Bible study and at worship.

Cost: \$120

Key Elements

- First 400 Mississippi adults and campers to register will each receive a \$20 credit
- Registration begins March 1 for Mississippi churches
- Small group Bible study
- Exciting age-appropriate worship
- Large variety of track time
- Camp-wide fellowships
- Big-time recreation

Note: Older Children's Retreat is for children who have completed grades 3-6 at the end of the 2000-2001 school year.

Special policy requires churches to send adult counselors (21 or older) with groups of young people under 18 years old. A counselor of the same sex is required for each seven girls or each seven boys (or portions thereof).

• For program information contact Linda Reeves,
Sunday School Department, (601)292-3294 or
1-800-748-1651

REGISTRATION FORM

Name of contact person _____
Church _____
Church Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____

Attach extra sheet including names of sponsors and names and ages of children

Return this form and \$40 registration for each person to:

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Gulfshore Baptist Assembly
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Pass Christian, MS 39571-3299
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Fax: (228) 452-7263

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MARCH 1, 2001

Think outside the lines! Get outside the walls!

YOUTH BIBLE STUDY: OUTSIDE THE WALLS

March 17, 2001 - FBC, Brandon

March 31, 2001 - FBC, Oxford

May 5, 2001 - FBC, Gulfport

9-11:30 a.m.

• For program information contact Mark Lott, Sunday School Department
(601)292-3295 or 1-800-748-1651

Pray this day for...

February 23-March 8, 2001

Prayer Ministry Office • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 601-292-3304 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-7729 (PRAY)

A PRAYER THAT HELPS YOUR DAILY GROWTH

"Lord Jesus, help me daily to meet You in Your Holy Word. Grant that I would no more neglect Your Word than I would neglect to eat my daily meals."

"How to Develop a Powerful Prayer Life" by Gregory R. Frizzell

Please continue praying for the country of Bolivia. Pray that God will work in the hearts of the government leaders, so that the civil unrest can be settled without further injury to the people. Pray that missionaries will be able to travel unimpeded throughout the country with the gospel message.

For (1) Season of Prayer for North American Missions (2) Pray for a nursing team that will be ministering in Niger in February and March, asking God to use them to tough lives and open doors among the Songhai people group.

The Buryat of Russia are one of the unreached people groups within the Russian Federation. They are an indigenous people of Siberia, of Mongol descent, with a population of 430,000. A complete translation of the Bible in the Buryat language is in progress. Please pray for the evangelization of the Buryat people.

Please pray for missionaries in Southeast Asia and Oceania who travel many miles to reach outlying fellowships. Many of the ethnic group churches they visit are growing and hungry, but there are a limited number of missionaries to encourage them. Pray for stamina and protection for these missionaries.

For (1) Growth Spiral; West Laurel BC (2) Alanna Davis, of Waltham, Mass., is a church planter missionary in the New England area. She asks us to pray for spiritual awakening in the hearts and minds of the people to recognize their need for a Savior. Pray that walls will be broken down to reach them.

The positive influence of Christian members of an indigenous Indian group living in northern Colombia is seen as a growing threat. Their homes, animals and belongings have been taken. Please pray that they will be able to find a place to stay permanently so they can plant some food crops and get on with their lives.

Thank God for physicians who have traveled to southwestern China to address the health spiritual needs of some very poor women and their children. They are called "garbage ladies" because they live on the streets and pick through garbage to find food and other essentials.

For (1) Baptist Building AT HOME DAYS 7th-9th (2) Please pray for safety and security for a missionary wife and child in Eastern Africa as they remain at home, ministering in an isolated place in the bush, while the husband and father is away on business.

More than 600,000 college students study on 90 college campuses in Manila in the Philippines. Ninety-five percent are lost. For eight years, Bible study outreaches have been conducted...currently on six campuses. Pray for the missionaries as they seek ways to witness to the students on all 90 campuses.

Tim Bailey, a church planter missionary pastor living at Sewell, N.J., is leaving his present position at Impact Community Church and is going to the state convention of Pennsylvania/South Jersey. Pray the church will get an interim pastor soon. Pray for Tim's family as they make this move.

For (1) State Youth Choir Festival (2) Pray that Palestinian believers will be confident in their faith, outgoing about their love for the Lord, inspiring in their spheres of influence, and protected as they swim very much "against the stream" with the religious majority and the nominal Christian minority around them.

For (1) State Keyboard Festival (2) Pray for the Lord to continue to place it upon the hearts of many to become church planters and be willing to start new Bible studies all across the Cancun-Tulum area in Mexico.

24

For (1) Mississippi Acteens Convention; FBC, Clinton, Camp Garaywa (2) Ask the Holy Spirit to break the chains of fear that permeate the Marma belief system of Bangladesh and replace it with the merciful love of God.

Drug usage is a problem in the interior cities of Brazil. The CRIAR foundation has been formed by a group of Baptists to provide a special ministry for children and adolescents at risk. Sixty-five at-risk boys participate five days a week in learning activities, and another part is treating 28 boys addicted to drugs.

3-89 MISS ALICIA L. RACEY

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Parents: Michael & Annette Racey, General Evangelism, SERVE in Western South America

4-83 MISS JENNIFER L. JOHNSTON

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9-91 MR. JOHN M. CURTIS

B.P. 130, Tenkodogo, BURKINA FASO

Parents: Clifton & Cathy Curtis, Agriculture, SERVE in West Africa

15-81 JOEL K. GLAZE

Mississippi College, Box 5944, Clinton, MS 39058

Parents: David & Gloria Glaze, Media Promotion, SERVE in Western South America

15-81 SETH R. GLAZE

Mississippi College, Box 5377, Clinton, MS 39058

Parents: David & Gloria Glaze, Media Promotion, SERVE in Western South America

17-80 JACOB W. WALLACE

WWC Box 704, William Carey College, 498 Tuscan Ave., Hattiesburg, MS 39401-5499

Parents: Karl & Peggy Wallace, Mission Administration, SERVE in The Caribbean Basin

19-80 BETHANY A. PEVEY

Delta State University, Cleveland, MS 38732

Parents: Frank D. Jr. & Jerry Anne, Richmond Associate, SERVE in Eastern Africa

21-82 JOEL B. COLLINS

9707 SW 57th Street, Cooper City, FL 33328

Parents: Charles F. & E. Suzanne, Business Management, SERVE in The Caribbean Basin

24-90 MISS KIMBLERY E. CARLTON

P O Box 1559, Gaborone, BOTSWANA

Parents: David & Pamela Carlton, Theological Education by ext., SERVE in Southern Africa

24-83 MR. JUSTIN A. MARTIN

C. C. 637, 5500 Mendoza, ARGENTINA

Parents: Asbury & Hope Martin, General Evangelism, SERVE in Western South America

28-87 MISS REBEKAH L. RAY

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Parents: Michael & Linda Ray, Religious Education, SERVE in Central & Eastern Europe

29-93 MR. CHRISTOPHER D. CARLTON

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Parents: David & Pamela Carlton, Theological Education by ext., SERVE in Southern Africa

APRIL



Church Facilities Workshop

March 15, 2001 8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Country Woods Baptist Church, Jackson


8:55-9:00 a.m	Welcome	
9:00-9:30	Preparing Your Church to Build	Gary Nicholson
CONSTRUCTION CONFERENCES - CHOOSE ONE		
9:35-10:30	Architects & Design Team	Gary Nicholson
	Construction Issues	Paul Jackson
	Renovation/Redesign Issues	Norman Perkins
	Codes, Regulation, Inspections Asbestos, Etc.	Don McClesky
	Design & Construction Methods	Carl Franco
10:30-11:00	Break/Fellowship/Visit with Vendors	
FINANCE CONFERENCES - CHOOSE ONE		
11:00-Noon	Building Program Budget, Costs, Etc.	Gary Nicholson
	Banks and Lending Institutions	Joey Babb
	Bonds Program	Mark McNeece
	Stewardship Campaigns	
	Challenge to Build	Jerry Mixon
	NAMB Church Finance Ministry	Karl Dietz
Noon	Lunch	
SUPPORT CONFERENCES - CHOOSE ONE		
1:00-1:55 p.m.	Legal Issues in Church Buildings and Property	Rich Young
	Technology and Lighting Issues	Farrell Blankenship
	Church Furnishings & Interior Design	Norman Perkins
	Acoustics/Sound Issues	Dave Edmonds
	Volunteers in Construction Missions Project	Terry Cross
PROGRAM CONFERENCES - CHOOSE ONE		
2:00-3:00	Education Space	Mark Lott
	(Youth, Adult, Children)	Don Hicks
	Preschool Children, Weekday Program	Linda Reeves
	Worship Space	Gary Nicholson
	Fellowship/Recreation/Support Space	Matt Buckles
	Relocation & Community in Transition/Relocation Issues	Steve Stone
3:00	Adjourn	

You may register by mail, fax (1.601.714.7426) or E-mail (kgordon@mbcb.org)

HOUSE TOPS

A black and white photograph of three men in suits and ties. Two men are standing in the back row, and one man is seated in the front row. They are all smiling at the camera. The man on the left is wearing a dark suit and a patterned tie. The man in the center is wearing a dark suit and a patterned tie. The man on the right is wearing a dark suit and a patterned tie. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Sulphur Springs Church, Conehatta, ordained Mickey Thrash, Huston Leach, and Truman Bishop as deacons on Jan. 14. Pictured (from left) are Thrash; Leach; Timmy Fanguy, pastor; and Bishop.



Tom Miller assumed the responsibilities of missions director for Jackson Association. He has served for four years in a part time position prior to this promotion. Miller also served as associate pastor and later as pastor of Eastlawn Church, Pascagoula; pastor of Southside Church, Lucedale; and associate pastor of Four Mile Creek Church, Escatawpa.



Andy Dillon was ordained as deacon Jan. 28 at Tylertown Church, Tylertown. Pictured (from left) are James Mize, chairman of deacons; Dillon and his wife Melissa; and Michael W. Glenn, pastor.

Harperville Church, Scott Association, recently held a deacon ordination service for Steve Martin. Pictured with Martin (center) are Don McDaniel, deacon chairman; and Parkes Marler, interim pastor.



Stanley Martin was ordained as a deacon at Zion Hill Church, Wesson, on Jan. 21. Pictured (from left) are Jerry Porter, chairman of deacons; Martin; and Tom McCormick, pastor.

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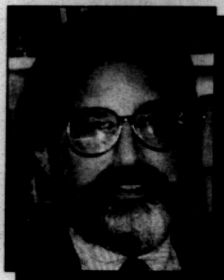
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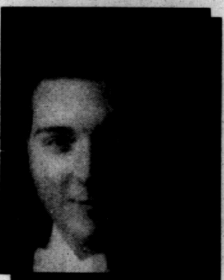
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Davis

William Carey College honored David Carson Davis of Ridgeland with the Distinguished Alumnus Award at the annual awards luncheon held during homecoming on the Hattiesburg campus. Davis currently serves as associate dean in the division of arts and letters at Millsaps College.



Frazure

Don Frazure of Pascagoula received the William Carey College (WCC) Distinguished Young Alumnus Award at the annual awards luncheon held during homecoming on the Hattiesburg campus. He made his New York debut at Lincoln

Center's Avery Fisher Hall singing the tenor solos in the New York premiere of Samuel Adler's oratorio, *Choose Life*. Frazure earned the bachelor of music degree in vocal performance at WCC and the master for music degree in vocal performance from the University of Southern Mississippi.

Blue Mountain College Office of Admissions invites high school senior girls to the annual Senior Preview Day on Friday, Feb. 23. Registration will begin at 9 a.m. and reservations can be made by calling (800) 235-0136.

Mississippi College will host high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors for Preview Day, Friday, March 23. Events for the day begin at 8 a.m. The

opening session will begin at 8:30 a.m. in the Grand Hall West of the B. C. Rogers Students Center. There will be a complimentary noon lunch provided by the college. The final event of the day will be

campus tours which will be conducted for the students and their parents from 1-1:30 p.m. For more information concerning preview day, call the admissions office at (601) 925-3800 or (800) 738-1236.

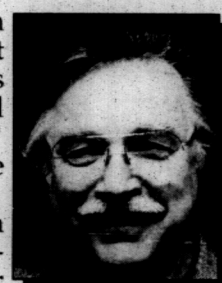
Baptist's counseling center re-accredited

The Samaritan Counseling Centers at Baptist Health Systems have recently received national accreditation.

Barry C. Click is the center's director.

The notification renews the Baptist program's accreditation for a second four-year term through April 2004.

The program, which began call (601) 973-1697.



Click

in 1995, was originally accredited in 1996 and provides counseling services in Jackson and the surrounding metropolitan area. The center is open Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., with some evening hours available.

For more information,

STAFF CHANGES

First Church, Ocean Springs, has called **J. Michael Barnett** as

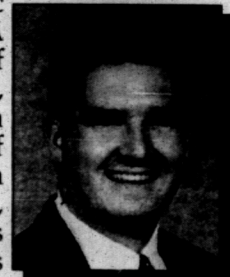
pastor, effective Jan. 3. He previously served for 11 years at Oak Grove Church, Eros, La. Barnett received his education at East Texas Baptist University, New Orleans Seminary, and Luther Rice Seminary.



Barnett

Mississippi and Southwestern Seminary.

Macedonia Church, Petal, has called **Tony Hinton** as minister of music and youth. A native of Liberty, Hinton is a graduate of Belhaven College, Jackson. His previous place of service was Morgantown Church, Natchez.



Hinton

David Estes joined First Church, Madison, as director of the Christian Activity Center, effective Feb. 5. He previously served as minister of students and recreation at McLaurin Heights Church, Pearl. Estes is a graduate of the University of

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JUNE 11, 11:45am-1:15pm
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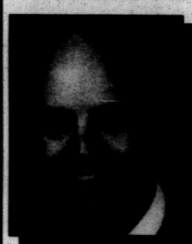
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Renewed Confidence In Ministry

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LeaderCare



Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

LifeAnswers

I am a very anxious person about most things, and I can see that I'm passing this along to my children. How can I keep from doing that?

Recognizing your problem is the first step. Talk with your doctor about effective new medications that can help you control this problem. Encourage your husband to give you a sign when you have gone too far with your anxiety. Exercise is a wonderful way to redirect your anxious energy, along with spiritual meditation on God's Word. Anxiety is usually caused by fear of some form. What are your fears? Pray about your fears and discuss them with your spouse, a trusted friend, or a Christian counselor. Keep a journal on the times you feel anxious and how you found relief. Memorize Phil. 4:6-7, taking each word and phrase and letting it sink into your soul. When you begin seeing life from God's perspective and not from your anxiety and fears, you will develop a

guarded heart and mind that is focused on Christ

I know this seems silly in comparison to most of the world's problems, but how do I tell my preschooler that our beloved cat needs to be put to sleep?

Start by explaining to your child, in language he/she will understand, that the cat is very sick. Help your child notice how much the cat is ailing. Explain the process of putting an animal to sleep, or have the veterinarian talk with him/her. The vet might even have a book or video on this process. Check the Internet as well. Be patient and allow your child time to sort through this situation and come to his/her own conclusions. Mold this into an opportunity for your child to see that he/she can trust you enough to come to you with any issue that concerns him/her. Don't forget to pray as a family for wisdom in making the right decision concerning this beloved pet.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. In central Mississippi, Ron Mumbower can be heard from 9-10 a.m. each Wednesday on WHJT-FM 93.5. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

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(I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death.
(I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you.
(I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him.
(I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

THANKS FOR COVERAGE

Editor:

I just want to thank all of you at The Baptist Record for the wonderful coverage you gave to Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) after our Annual Celebration on January 26-27.

Mission education in our churches is usually initiated by WMU. Most missionaries credit GAs or RAs at the beginning of the recognition of their call to full time mission service.

It is a privilege to serve the Lord through learning about missions, praying for missions, and doing missions in Mississippi and the world.

Betty W. Davis, president
Mississippi WMU

DON'T BE OFFENSIVE

Editor:

I would like to take a little stronger stand on the issue of the state flag than Jimmy Porter took in his guest opinion, Make It Our Flag, in the February 1 issue.

Approximately 38% of Mississippi's citizens are black, and probably at least 90% of those are offended by the rebel flag in the corner of our state banner. We, the white majority, will decide April 17 whether to continue offending them or adopt a symbol that is inoffensive to anyone. I would like to cite some Scripture on what the right choice is (KJV).

Rom. 14:21: "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak."

1 Cor. 10:32: "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God" (nor to your black brethren).

2 Cor. 6:3: "Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed."

Phil. 1:9-10: "And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgement; that ye may approve things that are excellent;

that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ."

If we have the love that we should have, we will have the good judgement to approve a state symbol that will not offend.

The time has come for Christians to care more about the feelings of others than about some prideful "heritage" that needlessly offends others contrary to the Scriptures.

Jimmy Edgarson
Port Gibson

NOT SUCCESSFUL

Editor:

Jimmy Porter is not very successful in attempting to conceal his choice of a state flag. His Scripture choices give him away. Not giving offense and reconciliation is a two way street. I am offended that 42 senators and that paragon of virtue, Jessie Jackson, find it offensive that John Ashcroft uttered kind words for Robert E. Lee and others who followed both the Cross of Christ and the Cross of St. Andrew.

In the Confederate armies, there was a revival which was greater than the two Great Awakenings in this country at least in its lasting effect. The men who both fought and evangelized under that flag laid the foundations of our Bible Belt and our Southern Baptist Convention and its institutions.

I am concerned with not offending the memory of Broadus, Manly, Carroll, Dagg, and other giants of our convention including O. D. Bowen, who founded my church, and reconciling with them rather than the likes of Hillary Clinton, Ted Kennedy, and the other 40 Senators who voted against the confirmation of John Ashcroft.

Some in the church would rather be politically correct than biblically correct and are afraid of offending the world. What is the next thing we must do to avoid offending the world, remove the book of Philemon from the Bible? I am offended by liberals who in

their quest to be politically correct insist on rewriting history as well as the Bible.

Carl D. Ford
Laurel

CAN OF WORMS

Editor:

When you allowed Jimmy Porter's (February 1) guest opinion to be printed in your paper, you allowed a can of worms to be opened. The present flag issue is not about "meat and potatoes" nor is it about "black and white." It is clearly about the great heritage that the State of Mississippi has and the deep rooted meanings behind it.

The present flag does not symbolize hatred and discontent for African-Americans but rather it proudly portrays the symbols that said our founding fathers had the right to bear arms, to fight for what they believed, and to create a State of the Union in which every American — black, white, red, or yellow — can be proud to live.

Yes, a few have been harmed while our state flag or its embedded emblem was waved about, but the same is true of the American flag. Let me be clear on this. I don't see Japanese-Americans wanting to take down and destroy our American flag and yet more of them have been killed under its waving glory than all of these special interest groups combined.

In retrospect, the special inter-

est groups are doing more harm to our state than any flag or symbol of the past may be. Let's pray for them.

Wendell L. Ladner
Mississippi State, Miss.

INFORMED IS BETTER

Editor:

Thanks for presenting Jim Thrash's critique of (Jerry Sutton's book entitled) The Baptist Reformation (Guest Opinion, February 15). He indicated his desire for different perspectives on the last 20 years in Southern Baptist Convention life. I wanted to offer two suggestions. Grady Cothen has written, What Happened to the Southern Baptist Convention? He provides an informed account of the controversy's impact and key issues that shaped it. Cothen calls what has happened a "personal catastrophe" for him and thousands of others.

Another book is called, The Fundamentalist Takeover in the SBC: A Brief History, written and compiled by Rob James, Gary Leaser, and James Shoopman. This work is produced by Mainstream Missouri Baptists, and offers a "moderate" response to the fundamentalist takeover.

These two aren't the only ones available but should give additional insight to the SBC controversy. It's an old saying but still applies, "An informed Baptist is a better Baptist."

Danny Chisholm
Meridian

LMCO GOALS REACHED

Mt. Zion Church, Blakeney is WMU director. Brookhaven, exceeded its goal of \$7,500 by giving a total of \$8,000 to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

Mount Zion Church, Taylorsville, exceeded its goal of \$1,200. The children (pictured) participated in Pennies for Lottie and raised over \$250.



Children of Mount Zion Church, Taylorsville

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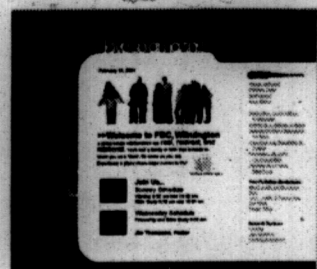
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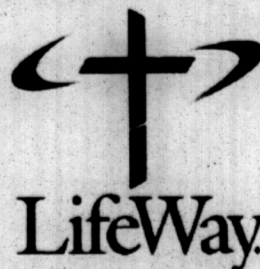
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Following Jesus

Mark 1:16-18; 2:13-17; 3:13-19

By Sharon Neff

A friend and I recently started taking a pottery class from a local potter. Instead of instructions and rules on the first day, we were handed clay and told to make whatever we wanted with it. The teacher did give some brief suggestions about making a pinch pot, but then said, "Do whatever you want, there are no rules here."

It was probably the first thing I'd done in years where there were no rules. I must admit that the part of me deep down inside that chafes against authority from time to time just bubbled over with happiness. There's no telling what wild thing I'd do (well, after all, it's just pottery — how wild can you get?).

From the first time as a toddler that we stomp our little foot and say "No!" all of us have times that we struggle with authority. It seems that previous generations have not had quite as much of a problem with this as our culture faces today.

In years past, it was assumed that you would obey your parents and teachers, accept the authority of your boss, accept the rule of law, and respect the authority of public and elected leaders. You might balk and complain a little, but not much more than that.

Today we are in the midst of a culture that openly rebels against authority. Many adults struggle with any type of



Neff

authority and don't want to cooperate with the boss, the law, or public officials. They want to do their own thing without any interference from others.

This fierce independence also spills over into the loyalty and commitment issue. Adults who want to completely run their own lives don't want either commitment to another person or loyalty to an organization or ideal to get in the way of their own selfish whims.

If a job, person, or even a church is not meeting their needs, or is not exciting enough, or requires too much of an investment of time, then you just discard it and find another one more to your liking.

There is a better way to live our lives. While "no rules" may be fine occasionally in a few situations in life, in general the better way is to

acknowledge the authority of Jesus and follow him. He calls us to follow him and expects us to do so with commitment and faithfulness, just like his first followers did.

When Jesus called Simon Peter and Andrew as they were fishing, they didn't hesitate. Mark says, "At once they left their nets and followed him" (1:18). We know from later information that Peter was a brash and independent man, but he willingly accepted the authority of Jesus.

Jesus also called another man who was used to following his own rules. Levi (or Matthew) the tax collector was given guidelines about taxes from the government, but was allowed to basically collect all he could and keep the excess.

He didn't hesitate to follow Jesus either as Mark tells us, "Levi got up and followed him" (2:14). He voluntarily left a life of self-rule and acknowledged the authority

and rule of Jesus.

In chapter 3 of Mark's gospel, it says that Jesus "called to him those he wanted, and they came to him" (v. 13). He appointed twelve to be his apostles. This diverse group accepted his authority and, except for Judas Iscariot, followed him loyally for the rest of their lives.

Jesus expects no less from us. When he calls us, he means for us to follow him and follow him faithfully. When we follow him, we experience his grace and we get to enjoy his presence.

Both of these make our lives meaningful and joyful as he transforms our lives into the best they can be. Yes, we do give up authority over our own lives and submit to his authority, but the rewards in our daily lives and the eternal rewards make following Jesus worth it all.

Neff is a member of First Church, Greenville.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Witnessing to the world

Acts 28:16-17a, 22-31

By Lee Yancey

Safely shipwrecked on the island of Malta for three months, Paul used his time to witness and to heal all on the island of their infirmities. He did manage to be bitten by a viper but he just shook the snake off into the campfire. The superstitious Maltese inhabitants thought he was a god. However, Paul used the opportunity to point them to Christ.

When winter passed, Paul, still a prisoner, and his 275 companions left for Rome aboard an Alexandrian ship with the fig-

urehead of Castor and Pollux (Gemini Constellation). Finally arriving in Rome, Paul was permitted to live alone with a soldier to guard him.

Create opportunities (vv. 16-17a). Tenacious Paul used his relative freedom in Rome to meet with the local Jewish officials. Paul was concerned that they might have heard of him from the viperous Jerusalem Jews and he wanted to defend himself face to face.

Being under house arrest allowed Paul a chance to meet with the most influential Jews



Yancey

in the city. They were impressed by his Jewish resume (Pharisee, studied under Gamaliel, etc.) and very anxious to hear him speak. As Christians, we need to look for ways to create witnessing opportunities, especially when circumstances limit the possibilities.

Target your witness (vv. 22-29). Finding common ground is vital when two differing parties come together. Paul made a habit of beginning with the ubiquitous Jews, who as a result of the Diaspora, were located in most towns in Asia Minor and Greece.

Because they had the Old Testament in common, Paul felt confident that by using the Old Testament scriptures, he could point them to the

Messiah, Jesus Christ.

He began by saying that he had been imprisoned because of "the hope of Israel." The Jews in Rome were very interested in hearing Paul's message. They had not yet determined whether they were supportive of Paul's cause or opposed to it.

When Paul finished sharing about the Gospel of Christ, some believed and some did not. Paul was discouraged by their unbelief and quoted a passage from Isaiah that said that the gospel would be declared unto the Gentiles and that they would accept it.

While Christian witnesses are not to ignore individuals or groups who are hardened to the gospel, they may target their witness to others who will listen and perhaps respond positively.

Follow through (vv. 30-31).

While Paul was under house arrest, he preached unhindered for a two-year period. Also during this time, Paul wrote letters, commonly called Prison Epistles, to the Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians. He also wrote a personal letter to Philemon.

Companions of Paul in Rome were Timothy, Luke, Tychius, Epaphroditus, and Mark. Paul witnessed to the whole Roman guard (Phil. 1:13) and was involved with the new Roman believers.

Like Paul, when believers commit to witness about Jesus, God will give them opportunities to follow through on their commitment. Believers can witness to the world without leaving home because the world has come to America.

Yancey is consultant for the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is a publication of news and information of interest to churches that take place in the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats,

no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing. All photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES



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"This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, for she was taken out of man. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame" (Genesis 2:23-25).

So began God's perfect plan for a man and a woman to be partners in life. They were to begin life on their own, apart from their parents, and to be united as one flesh after becoming husband and wife. If we stopped at Genesis 2, the whole world would be a perfect place, but in chapter 3, sin enters the world.

Today, sexual sin permeates the societies of every nation in the world. Whether it is premarital sex, adultery, homosexuality, rape, sexual harassment, abortion, pornography, or child sexual abuse, the peoples of our world are trapped in a web of sexual deviance.

Sexual sin has been in existence from the earliest times and today it is alive and well. However, in recent years, teenagers and college students across the world have bucked the trend of teen sexuality by joining a movement called True Love Waits.

It is estimated that nearly 3 million young people have pledged to remain sexually pure until marriage. More than a commitment not to have sex, True Love Waits is a commitment to God to be pure in every area of their lives.

I believe God is preparing a generation of young people to be a part of a movement that is bigger than themselves, a redirection of hearts and lives that God is orchestrating for His purposes.

Please commit to pray for all teens who have made this commitment and for those who are considering whether or not to save sex for marriage.



Yancey

If you are interested in receiving Christian Action updates via the internet and will share this information with friends and your church, please e-mail us at rwood@mbcb.org. Include your name, address, phone number, and church name.

Sex sells

Research shows that sex sells. It's a little bit of a cliché, but it's just what's going on in the sex industry. According to the New York Times, General Motors now sells more graphic sex films every year than does Larry Flynt, infamous owner of the Hustler empire. AT&T reportedly owns a company that sells sex videos to nearly a million hotel rooms. Says one AT&T official, "It's the crazy aunt in the attic. Everyone knows she's there, but you can't say anything about it." Maybe that's because they know when some consumers discover this information, their fingers will do the walking and another phone company will handle the talking.

Source: Washington Update, Oct. 23, 2000

Pledging abstinence helps

Teenagers who pledge to remain sexually abstinent until marriage are 34% less likely to have sex than those who do not take virginity vows.

Peter Bearman, professor of sociology at Columbia University, reports that 2.5 million teens in the United States had taken virginity pledges by 1996; however he believes the figure is closer to 3 million by now.

Many teens have signed covenant cards stating: "Believing that true love waits, I make a commitment to God, myself, my family, my friends, my future mate, and my future children to be sexually abstinent from this day until the day I enter a biblical marriage relationship."

The True Love Waits campaign, launched in 1993, accounts for nearly half of the

two million teenagers who have signed abstinence pledges over the last decade.

Researchers have found that pledges are delaying first intercourse by an average of 18 months. Pledges work best for those under the age of 15, before the greater pressure of high school hits.

They also work best with those who already have reasons for abstinence, prompting some to ask if they cause people to wait, or just reflect a decision to already do so. However, studies do reflect that those who make a public commitment to something are more likely to follow through on that commitment.

Sources: Baptist Press, Jan. 4, 2001; Youth Today, Nov. 10, 2000

Parents and religion still influential

According to several recent studies, parents and religious beliefs are a potent one-two combination when it comes to influencing a teen's decisions about whether or not to have sex. Even when it comes to the teens themselves, a substantial majority think young people should not have sex while in high school.

One survey of about 500 youth between 12 and 17 years old was conducted by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. The poll showed that 37% of the teens surveyed cited their parents as having the greatest influence on their decisions. Other factors affecting teen attitudes were friends (30%), the media (11%), and religious conviction (11%). (See chart.)

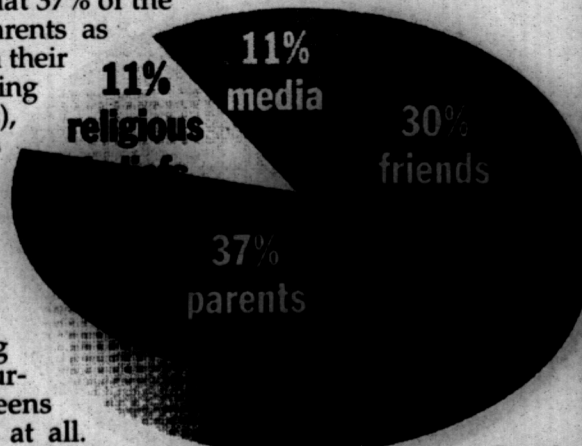
The heavy emphasis teens place on their friends' opinions should come as no surprise, but in this regard, another of the study's findings was encouraging. In overwhelming fashion, 78% of young people surveyed said they thought teens should not be sexually active at all.

Moreover, 64% of the teens who said they had had sex also said they regretted it, and would tell their younger siblings to delay having sex until they were at least out of high school.

"This poll is the latest evidence that many teens are taking a more cautious attitude toward having sex," said Sally Sachar, deputy director of the cam-

paign. "It also makes clear that parents can, and must, play an active and continuing role in helping their children understand that sex can wait."

The religious influence on the decision by some teens to refrain from sexual activities was also documented by two new studies. Independent researchers found that religious belief was the most influential in keeping young people abstinent.



78% of teens should not be sexually active at all.

64% of teens who had sex say they regret it.

Psychologists at Fordham University in New York, for example, found that "students who strongly identify with religious teachings and traditions" were "less likely to engage in sexual activity."

Source: AFA Journal, Jan. 2001, p. 8

STD'S RAMPANT IN U.S.

The federal government reports that 6.5 million Americans are walking around with a sexually transmitted disease. While new infections are down for some STDs, they're rising for others.

A breakdown of the latest year's 4.5 million new cases of sexually transmitted diseases:

Human Papillomavirus (HPV)	6.5 million
Trichomoniasis	3 million
Chlamydia	3 million
Genital Herpes	1 million
Gonorrhea	650 thousand
Hepatitis B	120 thousand
Syphilis	70 thousand

Source: US News and World Report, Dec. 13, 2000

Seventeen's sex survey

After a surprising sex survey, Seventeen magazine revealed that 71% of teens who've had sex wish they had waited. Seventeen magazine called 500 girls and 500 guys across the nation for an interview about sex. They asked 13 to 21 year-olds, "Have you had sex?" And if so, "Do you wish you had waited until you were older?" It was reported that 65% of the girls and 63% of the boys (ages 15 to 21) had sex at least once. Most who had sex wish they had waited.

81% of girls wish they had waited.
61% of boys wish they had waited.

International missions post gains in 2000

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
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RHO, TG, WPS RHZST GE
WPS TGJO DRFS KUGH
WPSF, RHO WPS ZTGJQ
GE WPS TGJO VPGHS
JGKHO RXGKW WPSF;
RHO WPSQ LSJS VGJS
REJRAO.

TKCS WLG: HAHS

Clue: K = U

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: First Peter Two: Twenty-One.

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — God continued to astonish Southern Baptist workers with phenomenal growth in overseas baptisms and church starts last year.

"God is at work and he is giving us the privilege of joining him in astounding ways," said International Mission Board (IMB) President Jerry Rankin in reporting missions gains during 2000.

Last year 6,520 new churches were established, an increase of 37.4% over the 1999 figure of 4,748. In addition, 451,301 people were baptized, an increase of 24.1% over 1999's 363,703.

Even with the jumps in statistics, Rankin warned against getting lost in the numbers.

"These are not just numbers or massive global reports," he said. "These are actual

BEGINNING A CHURCH — Residents of a Samburu village in Kenya check out the contents of a church start kit they just received from Baptist workers. The kit includes a hand-cranked tape player, tapes of sermons in the Samburu language, and flip charts illustrating Bible stories. Last year more than 6,500 overseas churches were established, a 37.4% increase over 1999's 4,748. (Photo by Grace Robinette)



1999; 1,383 international missionaries, a 5.6% increase from 1,317 in 1999.

Another indicator of God's activity overseas is the overwhelming number of volunteers who went on mission last year.

In 1975, when Southern Baptists set a goal of giving everyone in the world an opportunity to hear and respond to the Gospel by 2000, one objective was to multiply by 10 times the number of volunteers serving overseas.

God surpassed the visionaries' dreams.

Instead of sending the projected 10,000 volunteers in 2000, a total of 30,512 Southern Baptists participated in overseas missions projects

through IMB last year. The way God's work outstripped 1975's

one percent decrease from the previous year's 38,363.

- Bible teaching: 3.15 million people involved in Bible teaching, a 15.3% increase from the 2.7 million reported in 1999.

- New believers in discipleship: a 62.6% increase was recorded, bringing the total number to 461,901 over 1999's 284,038.

- Leadership training: 30,366 people enrolled in non-residential programs, a 46% increase over 20,802 in 1999; 17,975 enrolled in residential programs, a 40.8% decrease from 30,353 in 1999.

- Missionaries sent out by Baptist partners: 2,690 home missionaries, a .2% decrease from 2,726 in

goals explains why Rankin doesn't like to project missions results.



VOLUNTEERS ON MISSION — Ginger Brown, a dentist who joined a volunteer medical team in Venezuela, was one of 30,512 Southern Baptists who participated in overseas volunteer mission projects last year. (Photo by Sandy King)



MISSIONARIES AT WORK — Missionary Ken Cummins, left, and Honduran pastor Ramon Martinez stop while visiting in homes to pray for a baby that has a high fever. More than 4,000 missionaries were sent out by Baptist partners to serve in home and international missions last year. (Photo by Michael Keza)

individuals who have been brought into the kingdom of God."

The exponential growth in baptisms and church starts is a relatively recent development for the International Mission Board, he added. Historically, the board has recorded incremental growth rates of one percent or five percent a year.

"For many years, we were satisfied with the incremental growth," Rankin said. "For baptisms to reflect a 24.1% increase this year is amazing."

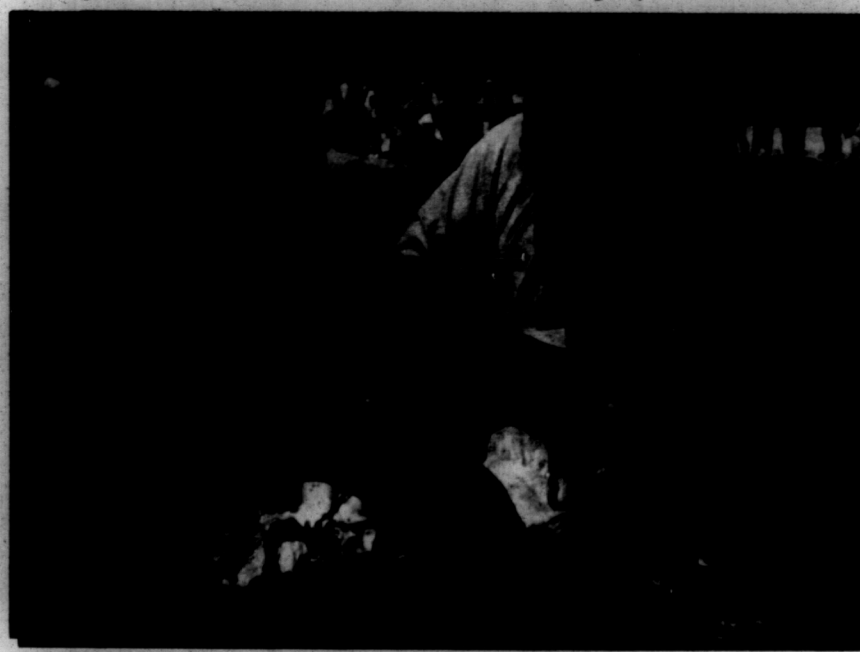
"It just shows how big God is."

The astounding growth in baptisms and church starts is just one example of how God is blessing Southern Baptist work overseas. Other points of comparison include:

- Total members: 5.6 million members in churches with which IMB workers are affiliated, a 14.4% increase over the 4.9 million reported in 1999.

- Total churches: 60,988 congregations with which IMB workers are affiliated, a 16.7% increase over 1999's 52,186 churches.

- New outreach groups: 3,682 new outreach groups (formerly called preaching points) brought the total number of outreach groups to 38,294, a two-tenths of



RIVER BAPTISM — Pastors in Pointe à Pitre, Guadeloupe, baptize a new believer. More than 451,300 people were baptized overseas last year by International Mission Board missionaries, an increase of 24.1% over last year's total of 363,703. (Photo by Denise McGill)

"It is not within our ability to project how many new churches will be started, especially as church planting movements take it far beyond our level of involvement," Rankin said. "It would be an insult to God to presume to identify how many new believers would be won to faith in Christ and baptized."

For more information on Southern Baptists' international mission efforts, contact IMB at P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230-0767. Phone (800) 353-0151.